



News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (6/18/21)

As California Reopens, here's a Look Back at What the State has Endured

[The New York Times reports](#) at midnight on Tuesday, it became official: California is open.

Of course, the coronavirus pandemic isn't over, and life isn't back to the way it was before most of us had heard of the mysterious, deadly illness we now call Covid-19.

But the lifting of nearly all of the state's remaining pandemic restrictions is a significant emotional and psychological milestone for residents of a state that has experienced some of the nation's most enduring lockdowns.

For many Californians, not much may change today. Workers will still have to wear masks, even if they're vaccinated, for at least part of this week.

Still, Californians have survived a lot in the past year and a half — and that's to say nothing of the wildfires, smoke-filled skies, heat, drought and other disasters that have befallen our state while the coronavirus has ravaged communities.

To view the full timeline of the coronavirus pandemic in California, beginning in January 2020, [visit the Time's full article](#).

As California Reopens, Timeline Unclear for State Employees to Return to Work In-Person

[KCRA 3 reports](#) on Monday, less than 24 hours away from California's reopening, the future of state employees returning to the office remained largely unknown.

On Monday, several Sacramento residents waited outside a DMV office for their turn for help with services. Among them was Adam Viney, who said wait times have increased for some services. While it's not going to be the hottest day of the week, it was still warm enough for Viney to talk about how much easier the process would have been had people been allowed inside the state building.

"I have a disability, I don't need to be standing out here in the sun. I'm pretty sure there are other people with disabilities, too. If you get enough people working, well we don't have to stand out in the sun all day. So, they need to open inside of the building too so people can go in and sit down," Viney said.

He added, "I don't know what the problem is. People are getting their shots -- people doing what they're supposed to do but still, we got to go through what we go through to get something taken care of."

Agencies like the California Office of Emergency Services and the California Highway Patrol have mostly remained in person as they respond to emergencies. For most other departments, they made the transition to telework as part of COVID-19 guidelines.

Mario Marquez also believes state employees should return to the office. He said while online services have helped do the job, it would make a bigger difference having people back inside.

KCRA 3 reached out to different agencies about the state's plan for its employees, but most of them referred us to the Government Operations Agency and the California Department of Human Resources.

The bottom line is that there isn't a set timeline for everyone to return to work in person and departments can keep allowing employees to keep working from home until -- and if -- a state policy is announced.

SEIU Local 1000, the state's largest workers union, representing about 96,000 state employees, did not respond to our request for information on plans or guidance to the different state agencies on how they will move forward with returning to work in person.

To view the statements from the agencies that responded to *KCRA 3*'s request for information on the future of state employees returning to the workplace, [view the full article](#).

Cal/OSHA Releases Latest Revised Proposal Adoption of COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards

[JD Supra reports](#) on June 11, 2021, California's Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (Standards Board) released its [latest set of proposed revisions](#) to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health's (Cal/OSHA) COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards (Revised ETS). The Standards Board will vote on the Revised ETS at its [June 17 Standards Board meeting](#), after which the proposed regulation will be submitted to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for approval. Once approved, the Revised ETS will take effect no later than June 28. Until then, the [current ETS](#) remains in effect.

This latest iteration of the Revised ETS—the third proposed version released since late May—signifies the latest development in a series of fits and starts by the Standards Board to pass updated COVID-19 standards to align with the latest guidance from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on physical distancing and the use of face coverings for vaccinated individuals.

Key Takeaways:

- Fully Vaccinated Employees Not Required to Wear Face Coverings Indoors: Consistent with the latest guidance from [CDC](#) and [CDPH](#), the Revised ETS will exempt “fully vaccinated” employees from wearing face coverings indoors. Employees who are not fully vaccinated will still be required to wear face coverings while indoors or in vehicles, subject to certain limited exceptions (e.g., being alone in a room, eating or drinking while maintaining physical distancing, while wearing a respirator, etc.)

- **Physical Distancing Requirement Removed:** Most notably, the Revised ETS omits physical distancing requirements, which appears to signal Cal/OSHA’s intent to have all employees either fully vaccinated or using respirators on a voluntary basis. Realistically, however, not all employees at any given worksite will be fully vaccinated, and even those provided respirators can still refuse them. Given the practical challenges in ensuring 100% vaccination and/or respirator use, employers unable to achieve these milestones should consider continuing to enforce physical distancing and the use of face masks for unvaccinated employees as a means of limiting COVID-19 exposures in the workplace.
- **“Exposed Group” Replaces “Exposed Workplace” for COVID-19 Exposures:** A COVID-19 exposure will now be drawn along the lines of the “Exposed Group,” defined as “all *employees* at a work location, working area, or a common area at work, where an employee COVID-19 case was present at any time during the high-risk exposure period.” (Emphasis added.) (Under the current ETS, COVID-19 exposures are drawn along physical bounds to include the “Exposed Workplace,” a definition that was particularly challenging for employers with large workforces working in a single location, such as a warehouse or distribution center.) Of significance, the Revised ETS’ delineation of a COVID-19 exposure to the “Exposed Group” will dictate (and arguably limit) the scope and extent of an employer’s myriad obligations, including: investigating, contract tracing, notifying, reporting and maintaining records, counting toward outbreaks, and administration of COVID-19 testing (where necessary). Importantly, the Revised ETS’ reference to “employees” should not be interpreted as referring only to a worker’s payroll status (*e.g.*, as a regular employee or contingent worker); the Revised ETS specifies that “[a]n exposed group may include the employees of more than one employer.”
- **Employers Will Need to Stockpile Respirators:** Signaling Cal/OSHA’s intent to encourage the widespread use of respirators for unvaccinated employees, the Revised ETS requires that “[u]pon request, employers shall provide respirators for voluntary use in compliance with [Cal/OSHA’s Respiratory Protection Standard] to all employees who are not fully vaccinated and who are working indoors or in vehicles with more than one person.” Of note, employers are only required to *provide* respirators upon request by the employee, not mandate their actual use. In so doing, however, employers must have their employees complete a [Voluntary Appendix D Acknowledgment](#) for voluntary respirator use.
- **Vaccination Documentation:** The Revised ETS’ definition of “Fully Vaccinated” requires that the employer have documentation of vaccinations in order to avail itself of provisions specially tailored to vaccinated employees. The Revised ETS does not specify *how* or on what *media* an employer must maintain such documentation, which suggests that more than one form of documentation would be acceptable to Cal/OSHA in proving an employee’s vaccination status. Employers must address potential privacy and recordkeeping implications in maintaining such records in light of workplace safety and health, employee confidentiality, and [equal employment opportunity \(EEO\) requirements](#).

- **Limitations on Testing for Minor and Major Outbreaks:** From inception, the ETS' broad and onerous testing requirements have engendered much consternation for employers dealing with major and minor outbreaks within their workforces. Carrying out those provisions proved to be particularly challenging for employers with large workforces assigned to a single worksite, such as warehouses, distribution centers and certain retail locations. The Revised ETS clarifies an employer's COVID-19 testing obligations by limiting the testing group to those within the "Exposed Group"—a more precise reformulation for evaluating COVID-19 exposures, as discussed above. For *minor* outbreaks, the Revised ETS now explicitly exempts from the testing group: (1) "[e]mployees who were fully vaccinated before [the testing provisions of the Revised ETS] became applicable to the workplace and who do not have COVID-19 symptoms"; (2) "COVID-19 cases who did not develop COVID-19 symptoms after returning to work . . . for 90 days after the initial onset of COVID-19 symptoms" and (3) "COVID-19 cases who never developed symptoms, [for] 90 days after the first positive test." For *major* outbreaks, employer will need to test "all employees in the exposed group, regardless of vaccinated status."

What Next?

Since the adoption of the current ETS, Cal/OSHA has prioritized enforcement of COVID-19 inspections and investigations, issuing hundreds of COVID-19 citations to employers throughout California, some of which carry significant six-figure penalties. Even with steadily decreasing infection rates and hospitalizations due to COVID-19, Cal/OSHA will continue to maintain its vigorous enforcement strategy through the Revised ETS. With these considerations in mind, employers with operations in California are strongly advised to revisit their COVID-19 protocols for compliance and update their written COVID-19 Prevention Plans and trainings to account for the new provisions in the Revised ETS. During this period of review, employers should pay special mind to the Revised ETS' new provisions dealing with fully vaccinated individuals and respirators. As with any compliance review, employers must devise a COVID-19 Protection Plan that strikes the delicate balance between satisfying the Revised ETS' minimal requirements without over-promising on protections that will not be delivered: Too little or too much can result in litigation and potential legal exposure. Employers are strongly encouraged to consult with counsel specializing in occupational safety and health.

Mobile Air Traffic Control Tower Aids in California Wildfire Fight

[Reuters reports](#) amid a worsening drought emergency and fires already blazing across California, Titus "Stretch" Gall is gearing up for another long wildfire season.

The 72-year-old former air traffic controller is the president of Tower Tech Inc, a mobile air traffic control tower company that helps agencies like the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) and the National Forest Service control the airspace over wildfires.

Five years before retiring, Gall began designing what would become a nearly 14-foot-tall air traffic control tower on a trailer pulled by a truck.

The tower cab is equipped with everything an air traffic controller would require: weather-monitoring sensors, iPads to show air traffic, satellite dishes for the internet, phones and antennae for radios.

The cab is also fitted with special glass and shades so Gall and his colleagues can see clearly out across the tarmac at airfields. Amenities to keep the controllers comfortable can be found in the trailer, such as a refrigerator, toilet and shower.

Gall says his company is the first mobile air traffic control company certified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), a process he said took more than five years.

As of May, California authorities had documented over 1,000 more wildfires across the state this year than had erupted by the same time last year, Governor Gavin Newsom said last month.

In 2020, the state marked its heaviest wildfire season on record in terms of total acreage burned. More than 4 million acres (1.6 million hectares) and over 10,000 homes and other structures were laid to waste and at least 33 lives lost.

Gall has seen conditions worsen since moving to California in the early 1980s.

California State Guard Trains for State Emergencies

[Defense Visual Information Distribution Service \(DVIDS\) reports](#) soldiers with the Operations Group, California State Guard, prepared for future contingencies by partnering with local and state agencies to participate in their annual training exercise in San Luis Obispo, June 11-13.

The Operations Group is comprised of various detachments to include the Mission Support Detachment (MSD), Emergency Communications Detachment (ECD), Search and Rescue (SAR), 26th Mounted Operations Detachment (MOD), and the InterAgency Liaison Detachment (ILD). The units formed Joint Task Force Bayonet.

The detachments worked together in austere conditions to respond to a simulated emergency that involved a downed aircraft with casualties during a wildfire. The Mission Support Detachment set up tents and shelters for the exercise, and the Emergency Communications Detachment (ECD) established communication for the Tactical Operations Center, a mobile command post.

“Communication is very vital to the success of any organization, and when you have multiple units, and in this case a Joint Task Force working with interagencies, the communication is vital to the success of that,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Alziebler, acting first sergeant for the ECD who joined the CSG 11 years ago as a way to give back to his community. “I wanted to volunteer to an organization where I could give back to society, and I find this beneficial because you also gain the training and get real-world experience that you would get in the military.”

On the second day of the exercise, Joint Task Force Bayonet deployed SAR, a ground search and rescue team, as well as the 26th MOD, an equestrian search and rescue team, to work alongside the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff’s Office to search for survivors and collect evidence at the simulated crash site.

The InterAgency Liaison Detachment (ILD) serves as a liaison between civil authorities and military forces when the California State Guard is activated by the Governor. The CSG is prepared to respond to state emergencies to include wildfires, earthquakes and floods.

“It was a really robust training, and it was as realistic as we could make it,” said Lt. Col. John Kraft, commander of the ILD, a former pilot who joined the CSG nine years ago after retiring from the Air Force after 25 years. “Our number one goal is to help preserve life and property for all our citizens in the state.”

“The state guard has really shown to be a true partner to the California Military Department,” added 1st Sgt. Prezell Harris, first sergeant of Headquarters Company, Operations Group, who has served in the CSG for 13 years. “One thing I can extrapolate from this experience is that we have a lot of dedicated volunteers here, and I’m proud to serve with them.”

A Problem Silicon Valley Can’t Solve: Drought, Quake Risk

[*The Los Angeles Times* reports](#) California is known for its history of natural disasters, and in the Silicon Valley, two potential calamities — drought and earthquake risk — are converging to dry up water supplies in the hub of the state’s tech economy.

In a meeting on Wednesday, June 9th, board members of the Santa Clara Valley Water District voted unanimously to declare a [water shortage emergency](#) — in part because a key county reservoir had to be drained to reduce earthquake risks highlighted by federal regulators.

County officials warned last year that the draining of Anderson Reservoir would put the region in a perilous position but were forced to drain the lake anyway, since the reservoir and dam sit atop the Calaveras fault, which could trigger a high-magnitude earthquake.

To preserve supplies, the district is calling for a mandatory 33% reduction in water use compared to 2013 and is planning to rely almost entirely on groundwater, said Tony Estremera, the valley water district’s board chair. But if too much groundwater is tapped, the ground is likely to sink, he said, challenging the structural integrity of roads, bridges and buildings.

“That’s really not acceptable in a place where we have some of the largest companies in the world,” said Estremera, referring to tech giants Apple and Google, which have campuses in Silicon Valley.

To prevent land from subsiding, the water district wants local governments to implement restrictions, including reducing lawn watering to three days a week, banning the filling of swimming pools and ending the use of potable water for washing buildings.

That will hurt some homeowners and businesses, but David Gurrola, a landscaper in East Palo Alto, says it could help his. He expects some clients will begin pulling out turf and replacing it with cactuses, succulents, bark and gravel, and adding high-efficiency drip irrigation systems.

“That’s what they did during the last drought,” said the owner of E&D Landscaping, referring to the dry years between 2012 and 2016. “No reason to give up on your yard or garden.”

While Southern California has so far avoided emergency drought restrictions, Santa Clara County — which includes San Jose, the state’s third-largest city — is scrambling, and the rest of the Bay Area is not far behind.

The U.S. Drought Monitor reported Thursday that four of the six San Francisco Bay Area counties had moved into “exceptional” drought — the most dire drought categorization, reflecting the potential for widespread crop and pasture loss, as well as the potential for water emergencies.

San Mateo and Santa Clara counties remain in “extreme” drought.

To read more on the Silicon Valley’s current drought situation, view the full article, [linked here](#).

Blistering Heat Bearing Down, with Triple-Digit Temperatures that Threaten the Los Angeles Area

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) a heat wave blanketing Southern California is driving blistering temperatures from the beaches to the mountains, triggering excessive-heat warnings and sparking fears that the hot, dry conditions are ripe for wildfires.

With temperatures expected to reach triple digits in some areas, the National Weather Service issued an excessive-heat warning from 10 a.m. Tuesday to 9 p.m. Friday in the mountains of Ventura and Los Angeles counties, not including the Santa Monica range.

The worst heat will probably bake the region Tuesday and Wednesday, with gradual cooling Thursday and into the weekend, said meteorologist David Sweet with the weather service’s Oxnard office.

Searing temperatures are expected in the inland parts of Los Angeles County, with Santa Clarita and Woodland Hills likely to reach 109 degrees Wednesday and Lancaster 111.

The coastline will also see unusually hot conditions, with 86 degrees expected in Ventura and Malibu on Tuesday and 97 predicted for Long Beach.

Some of the hottest temperatures are expected in the low desert areas, including the Coachella Valley and Borrego Springs, which could see highs between 110 and 120 for an entire week.

Temperatures could break records and will clock in about 10 to 20 degrees above what’s typically recorded this time of year in some places, Alex Tardy, a meteorologist with the weather service’s San Diego station, said in a recent briefing.

A combination of hot air overhead and northerly winds is causing the above-normal temperatures. The winds are causing red flag conditions in southern Santa Barbara County, with gusts of 40 to 50 mph. And the low humidity, high heat and unseasonably dry fuels are creating an elevated fire risk, the weather service said.

Critically low moisture levels may have contributed to the eruption of the 400-acre Flats fire in the Santa Rosa Mountains on Sunday morning. The fire, which burned at least two homes, continues to threaten several mountain communities southwest of Palm Desert in Riverside County.

One firefighter was injured in the blaze, and officials are concerned the regional heat wave will complicate the fight to extinguish it.

Temperatures are expected to drop by the weekend, but some areas, including the mountains and deserts, might hang on to the heat wave longer, Tardy said.

Even when the heat recedes, the combination of intensely high temperatures and prolonged dryness will worsen California's critical climate condition.

Six of the last 10 years have had below-average rainfall, according to the Los Angeles Almanac. The latest heat wave underpins California's increasingly dry environment, with a drought emergency blanketing 41 of the state's 58 counties.

To stay cool in the coming days, officials say, people should drink plenty of fluids, stay in air-conditioned rooms or shade as much as possible and not leave children or pets unattended in vehicles.

Among other tips from the National Weather Service:

- Check in with older relatives and neighbors.
- Wear light-colored and loose-fitting clothing.
- Reschedule strenuous activities to cooler hours in the morning and evening.

ICYMI: Funding Opportunities Ending Soon

- **[2021 Natural Community Conservation Planning \(NCCP\) Local Assistance Grant Program](#)**; *environment and water*
 - Funded by: Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Deadline: **Friday, June 18, 2021**
 - Total estimated funding: \$2.567 million
 - Full grant guidelines: [linked here](#)
- **[Public Access Program 2021 Proposal Solicitation Notice](#)**; *libraries; parks & recreation; arts*
 - Funded by: Wildlife Conservation Board
 - Deadline: **Tuesday, June 29, 2021**
 - Total estimated funding: \$5 million
 - Full grant guidelines: [linked here](#)
- **[Used Oil Payment Program](#)**; *education; environment & water; transportation*
 - Funded by: Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
 - Deadline: **Wednesday, June 30, 2021**
 - Total estimated funding: \$6 million
 - Full grant guidelines: [linked here](#)

Funding Opportunities

Proud Parenting Grant Program

[The Board of State and Community Corrections](#) has created the Proud Parenting Program to support young parents who are or were involved in the juvenile systems and/or who are considered crossover youth within the child welfare system.

This grant program assists participants and their children by supporting approaches that increase parenting knowledge, supports positive parent-child interactions, and improves co-parenting relationships.

The Proud Parenting Grant Program, previously known as the “Young Men as Fathers Program,” was originally established in 1997 under the California Youth Authority. In 2005, the Corrections Standards Authority assumed grant administration responsibility for the program and in 2012, upon its establishment, the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) assumed responsibility. The intent of the Proud Parenting Program is to support young parents who are or were involved in the juvenile systems and/or who are considered crossover youth within the child welfare system.

Participants must be 25 years old or younger at time of enrollment. This grant program assists participants and their children by supporting approaches that increase parenting knowledge, supports positive parent-child interactions, and improves co-parenting relationships. In addition, the grant helps to provide community linkages and encourages family-centered activities to strengthen generational bonding.

The annual state budget historically provides \$835,000 for the Proud Parenting Grant Program, all of which is used for grant awards. Subject to a continued annual appropriation, this new grant cycle will begin on January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024 for project services. An additional three (3) months (January 1, 2025 through March 31, 2025) is solely for the purposes of completing and submitting the Local Evaluation Report and the Financial Audit.

An eligible applicant must be a:

- California County Office of Education,
- California County Probation Department,
- Federally Recognized Indian Tribe in California, or
- Not-for-Profit Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) in California

Successful applicants will be funded for three (3) one-year grant cycles up to a maximum of \$100,000 per year. Each subsequent year, up to two (2) additional years, will be funded at the amount requested in the original application for funding.

The Proud Parenting Grant Program does not require matching and/or leveraged funds.

Total estimated funding available is \$835k. The deadline to apply is **Friday, August 6, 2021**. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).

2021-22 Unserved/Underserved Child and Youth Advocacy (XY) Program RFP

[The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services](#) has created the XY Program to provide advocacy and support services to unserved/underserved child and youth victims of crime. This can be accomplished by maintaining and/or enhancing the existing efforts to commit staff time to specifically address the needs of the identified child and youth victim population, hiring staff that reflects that population, training staff on the cultural norms of the population, and/or increasing outreach efforts.

To be eligible to receive funds, the Applicant must be a non-governmental organization (NGO) that provides services to child and youth victims who are under the age of 18.

Eligible applicants:

- Must be a non-governmental organization (NGO) that provides services to child and youth victims who are under the age of 18
- Receive a minimum of 50% of available points on the Rating Sheet
- Must be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) and have an expiration date that is at least eight weeks after the Application due date
- NGOs must be registered with the California Department of Justice's Registry of Charitable Trusts

Matching Funding Requirement:

- Applicants may request a partial or full match waiver (match waiver requests are not considered during the Proposal Rating process).
- To request a match waiver, applicants must submit the VOCA Match Waiver Request form (Attachment A) with their proposal.
 - All sections of the form must be completed.
 - Answers to questions 9-11 must be specific and unique to the Applicant and Program.

Total estimated funding available is \$2.522 million. The deadline to apply is **Thursday, August 12, 2021**. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#). To view the online application, [click here](#).

Beverage Container Redemption Pilot Project Grant Program (2019-20)

[The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery \(CalRecycle\)](#) administers a program to provide opportunities for California local government and recycling center operators to improve redemption opportunities for eligible beverage containers and increase recycling rates in unserved convenience zones statewide.

Eligibility:

- Jurisdictions are eligible to apply for pilot project funding. A "Jurisdiction" for the purposes of the Pilot Project Program (CCR Section 2750(a)(2)) means a city or county, or combination of cities or counties, that has the authority to issue or grant permission for certified pilot project recyclers to operate in the designated pilot project area.
 - Jurisdictions must have received approval from CalRecycle to operate a pilot project through the pilot project approval process.
- Authorized Pilot Project Recycler
 - A Pilot Project Recycler must be authorized by the Pilot Project Jurisdiction to operate in the pilot project area.
 - A Pilot Project Recycler must be certified by CalRecycle to operate in the pilot project area.
- The request for funding will consist of a proposed Budget and Work Plan.

Pilot Projects:

- Pilot projects may be at residential, commercial, or public locations in an approved pilot project area.
- The pilot project program allows for numerous possibilities and flexibility for methods of redemption, including, but not limited to:
 - Stationary drop off locations that allow consumers to deposit beverage containers in a locked and secure drop off bin and pay consumers the California Redemption Value after the containers have been inspected.
 - Mobile pilot projects.
 - A pilot project rotating between a few specific locations during the week.

Total estimated funding available is \$5 million. The deadline to apply is **Saturday, January 1, 2022**. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#). To view the online application, [click here](#).